May 2024

The Eagle Examiner

Our mission is to inspire and guide each student to his or her maximum potential

The Final Countdown

Message from the Superintendent

It is hard to believe that in less than two weeks, we will be celebrating the graduation of the Class of 2024. This year has flown by, but I feel like they always do. It seems like it was just yesterday that they were in kindergarten, and yet here we are. They have accomplished so much in their time at Big Walnut, and I will highlight many of those accomplishments in the June edition of the Eagle Examiner.

Ryan McLane

As a district, I feel like we have accomplished a great deal over the past two years. From a curriculum standpoint, we have made great strides in reading, writing, and math materials for our students and staff, especially at the pre-k through 5th grade level. At the higher end, our administrative team and teaching staff have worked to improve opportunities for our students so that they are prepared to Enlist, Enroll, or be Employed. In seeing the success of some of our recent graduates, we are on the right path.

We have upgraded many of our buildings, some of which you see, some of which you don't. We have also improved student and staff safety. The Raptor visitor management system was rolled out this year and has provided an additional layer of security for those in our buildings. The work of our three School Resource Officers has been a great benefit to our district, and I am excited that we will be adding a fourth SRO to Big Walnut in the fall.

While I am often reminded that we still have a ways to go in improving all areas of our district, I believe we are making progress, and I am excited about what lies ahead.

Congratulations!

Ohio Middle Level Association
Educate, Advocate, Celebrate

SUPPORT STAFF of the YEAR

Ms. Koby Donohue

BIG WALNUT LOCAL SCHOOLS | INSPIRE & GUIDE

Board of Education

Winding Down and Gearing Up

Stephen Fujii
President
Board of Education

Final exams, prom, academic and sports banquets, art shows, Field Day, special field trips for outdoor experiences, memorable 8th-grade trips, and graduation all signify the culmination of a school year. While the 2023–24 school year is winding down, there is still much left to do, celebrate, and prepare for before we officially tie a bow on it.

Students will undoubtedly enjoy these moments. And as a board member, I celebrate with them!

This month, I will focus on engaging and demonstrating appreciation for our teachers. It's important to reflect on the dedicated individuals who have made this fun possible. Teacher Appreciation Week, from May 6th to May 10th, provides us with the perfect opportunity to recognize and celebrate Big Walnut's teachers' hard work, passion, and commitment. These educators play a vital role in shaping the minds and futures of our students, and their efforts deserve our utmost gratitude.

I encourage everyone in our community to take a moment during Teacher Appreciation Week to express appreciation to the teachers who have made a difference in their lives or their children's lives. Whether it's a simple thank you note, a small gesture of kindness, or a heartfelt message of gratitude, let's make sure our teachers know how much they are valued and appreciated.

In addition to recognizing our teachers, I would also like to highlight the various employment opportunities available within our school district. As a board member, I realize we have needs. We currently need bus drivers, custodians, food service professionals, and more. These positions play a crucial role in supporting the overall functioning of our schools and ensuring a safe and positive learning environment for our students. If you or someone you know is seeking meaningful employment opportunities within our community, please consider joining our team.

Whether it's through showing appreciation to our teachers or exploring employment opportunities within our district, there are numerous ways to get involved and positively impact our students' lives. Together, let's continue to support and celebrate the incredible individuals who contribute to the success of our schools and the Big Walnut community.

Thank you for your ongoing support and dedication to education at Big Walnut. Our June issue of the Eagle Examiner will be a great time for me to reflect on our work as a board as we also celebrate the accomplishments of our district.

Bank Note

Who is Handling Our Money?

The Treasurer's Office oversees the district's financial operations, including a semi-monthly payroll for over 400 employees. The district has an annual budget of over $71 million. The department employs a Treasurer/CFO, Assistant Treasurer, Accounts Payable and Accounts Receivable managers, EMIS Coordinator, Internal Auditor, and Payroll/Benefits manager.

Treasurer's Office Staff:

- Scott Gooding, Interim Treasurer/CFO
- Lynn Starner, Assistant Treasurer
- Andrea Hanners, Accounts Payable/Purchase Coordinator
- Heather Mahle, Accounts Receivable Manager (starting 06/03/24)
- Lisa Stiles, EMIS Coordinator
- Chazity Wrinkle, Internal Auditor
- Tammy Fry, Payroll/Benefits Manager

The department is responsible for all accounting, payroll, and financial reporting requirements of the District. The Treasurer of an Ohio school district serves as the Chief Financial Officer and reports directly to the Board of Education. Many of the duties and responsibilities of the Treasurer/CFO are outlined in various sections of the Revised Code.

The Treasurer/CFO is responsible for the preparation of the annual budget and the publication of an annual report. By law, the Board of Education must adopt a budget by September 30 of each year. Copies of the District's budget are available to the general public.

By January 1st of each year, the District must issue an audited annual financial report. For the past ten years, the District has published financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). These statements include financial statements, budget statements, and statistical information about the District and the services and programs it provides. Copies of the District's financial statements are available to the public.

The Treasurer/CFO also serves as the Secretary to the Board of Education. In this role, all contracts, documents, and the official minutes (including audio tapes) of all Board meetings are kept for safekeeping. Board meeting tapes are public records and can be reviewed by any citizen during business hours. Currently, the District has minutes of Board meetings on file that date back to 1882. Board minutes are also public records and can be reviewed by any citizen during business hours.

As the District continues to develop and expand its web pages, the Department of Finance will make many documents, including the budget and the annual report, available for review.

Graduation

As the academic year draws to a close, Big Walnut High School is gearing up to bid farewell to its graduating seniors. However, it's not just about tests and textbooks; the district is orchestrating a heartfelt send-off for its departing seniors.

The start of the festivities is the "Eagles' Last Flight" on May 16, where seniors don their caps and gowns for a nostalgic bus tour across the district. This fun event provides seniors with the opportunity to say goodbye to the teachers, secretaries, bus drivers, custodial workers, and cafeteria staff who've played pivotal roles in shaping their education.

The celebrations continue on May 17 with a senior breakfast and graduation rehearsal. At 8:00 a.m., seniors gather at the high school for one last breakfast before the rehearsal of the graduation ceremony.

Finally, the Graduation Ceremony is on May 18. With 311 seniors set to graduate, the ceremony promises to be unforgettable, featuring student speakers, musical performances, and special recognitions for military enlistees and academic achievers. It's a time of reflection, celebration, and community pride as Big Walnut prepares to bid adieu to its graduating class of 2024, sending them off into the next chapter of their lives with fond memories and best wishes.

Engineering Program

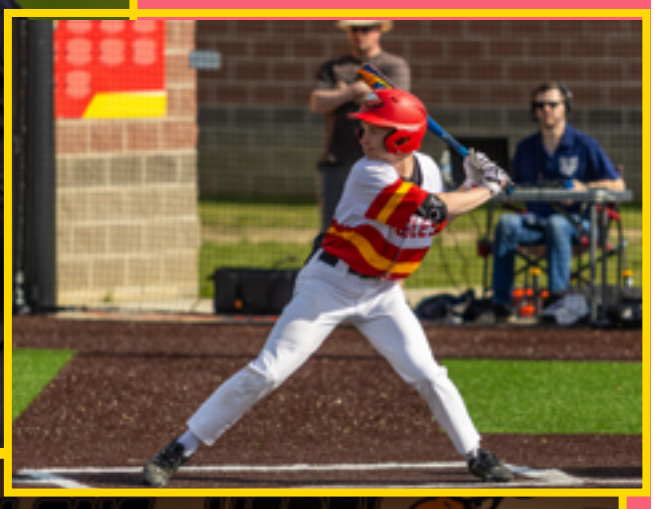
BWMS: Pre-Engineering -- Water Bottle Rockets

In the second semester, Mr. Steele's Middle School Pre-Engineering students learned about thrust and aerodynamics as they built their own water bottle rockets. Students learned the main forces within rocketry and then took their understanding to build a rocket out of a 2-liter bottle. Students had their first launch in April and then will launch again after they make modifications. In the picture, a rocket is caught right after lift-off as it soars into the air. Students learn failure is a necessary part of the process, while the emphasis is put on improvement. This is just one of the projects that Mr. Steele has his students do in Pre-Engineering.

Ben Steele
Engineering Instructor

BWHS: Principles of Engineering -- National Robotics Challenge

During the fourth quarter, Mr. Steele's Principles of Engineering students learned about internal and external forces on trusses. Their understanding of statics and material properties helped them to build a popsicle stick bridge out of 75 popsicle sticks and wood glue. The bridges were then tested until failure to determine if they could identify the breaking joint. In the picture, Tai Colbert and Hayley McKelvey show off their bridge prior to testing day. Students learn failure is a necessary part of the process while the emphasis is put on improvement. This is just one of the topics covered in Mr. Steele's Principles of Engineering classroom.



BIG WALNUT LOCAL SCHOOLS | INSPIRE & GUIDE

WE'RE HIRING

BUS DRIVERS
CUSTODIANS
FOOD SERVICE WORKERS
SUBSTITUTES (ALL AREAS)
TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Apply Now!

Agricultural Science Program

Jeffrey Stimmell
Agricultural Sciences Instructor

What a challenging and exciting year it has been! This month, we wanted to reflect on student successes from this school year. Students in the agricultural science program can participate in various competitions and community activities. I want to highlight our state and national finalists from this school year. Please note this is a record-breaking year for our chapter, bringing home seven top-five team banners!

Floriculture CDE - 6th Place National Team

In November, at the National FFA Convention & Expo, Savannah Durheim, ToryLea Eifert, Riley Norling, and Lainey Soule represented our school and the state of Ohio in the National Floriculture CDE. This team placed sixth in a field of 44 state-winning teams. Savannah Durheim placed 8th, and Lainey Soule placed 11th individually, each earning a scholarship for their achievements.

Food Science & Technology CDE - 2nd Place National Team

At the National FFA Convention & Expo in November, our Food Science & Technology CDE team represented Ohio. This team placed second in the nation! Gracie Young was named the national runner-up, and Paris Anderson was the fourth-place individual, earning scholarships for their achievement. These students and team members, Aidan Chadwick and Maddy Jones, were recognized on the convention stage. Congratulations to this team for representing our community well against 36 state-winning teams.

Food Science & Technology CDE - 1st Place State Team

In January, a new group took on the challenge of competing in the Food Science & Technology CDE. Savannah Durheim, Jenna Ebbers, Brandon Edwards, and Jordyn Lokey placed first at the state level. Of the nearly 1,800 students from 138 schools, Brandon Edwards placed second, Jenna Ebbers placed fourth, Savannah Durheim placed fifth, and Jordyn Lokey placed eighth. Brandon and Jenna each earned a scholarship for their achievement. This group will represent Ohio in October at the National FFA Convention & Expo.

Biotechnology CDE - 1st Place State Team

Madi Dible, Haylie McComas, Riley Norling, and Lainey Soule placed first in the Biotechnology CDE in February. The team had the highest problem-solving and research scores and was led by freshman Madi Dible, the fifth-place individual.

Greenhand Quiz CDE - 6th Place State Team

Joey McMillen, Madi Dible, Aashvi Soni, and Emma Wheeler placed sixth in the Greenhand/First Year Member Quiz in February. The team worked tirelessly to prepare for the exam, which had more than 3,400 students participate from across the state of Ohio. Joey McMillen placed 20th individually in the competition, with all of our students placing within the top 10% of all competitors.

Milk Quality & Products CDE - 2nd Place State Team

For the first time in many years, we had a team participate in the Milk Quality & Products event. This team participated at the state level in March and placed second. The team has earned the chance to represent Ohio at the Eastern States Exposition in September. Congratulations to Olivia Jenkins, Riley Norling, Lainey Soule, and Landon Sewell on this achievement.

Agricultural Science Program

continued from page 7

Floriculture CDE - 3rd Place State Team

In March, our Floriculture team, consisting of Joshua Schutt, Gracie Young, Olivia Jenkins, and Paris Anderson, placed third at the state level in the Floriculture event. Congratulations to this team for their hard work and dedication!

Dog Grooming CDE - 1st Place State Team

In April, Jordyn Lokey, Emma Wheeler, Ella Russell, and Lilly Cappitte placed first in the Dog Grooming CDE. Jordyn Lokey placed first overall, Emma Wheeler placed 10th, Ella Russell placed 11th, and Lilly Cappitte placed 12th. This was the chapter's second year competing in this competition.

Equine Management CDE - 4th Place State Team

Mallory Cline, Jenna Ebbers, Mackenzie Green, and Sophia Melvin placed 4th in the state finals for the Equine Judging CDE. The team scored a perfect score in the team scenario. This was the first time the team competed in the finals since 2016. Congratulations to this team for placing fourth in the state competition.

Agricultural Issues Forum - 4th Place State Team

Lilly Cappitte, Mallory Cline, and Chelsie Kofi-Opata represented the chapter in the Agricultural Issues Forum in April. Before the state event, students met with community groups, including a Delaware County Commissioner, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission representatives, and local business leaders to share information about their work. Congrats to this team for placing fourth at the state competition!

Purple Star

We are delighted to share some exciting news with our Big Walnut community! The Ohio Department of Education and Workforce has once again renewed all Big Walnut Local Schools' designations as Purple Star Schools. This prestigious recognition underscores our unwavering commitment to serving military-connected students and families within our district.

At Big Walnut Local Schools, we believe in creating an environment where every student feels supported and empowered to thrive. That's why we're proud to be part of Future Forward Ohio, aligning with the state's strategic priorities for education. We understand the unique challenges faced by Ohio's military-connected youth and are dedicated to overcoming obstacles to learning.

The Purple Star award signifies more than just a designation—it represents our school's demonstrated commitment to meeting the diverse needs of our students and families. Ohio's Purple Star Advisory Board has set stringent criteria for schools to earn this distinction, and we are proud to have met and exceeded these standards.

We want to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our outstanding staff, students, and families for their continued support and dedication. Through our collective efforts, we are able to create a nurturing and inclusive environment for all members of our school community.

Each Purple Star designation is valid for three years, and we look forward to continuing our journey of excellence in supporting military-connected students and families.

Thank you for being part of our Big Walnut Local Schools family, where every student's success is our top priority.

Around the District

Big Walnut High School Hosts Powerful Mock Crash Demonstration Ahead of Prom Night

In a bid to raise awareness about the dangers of distracted driving, Big Walnut High School organized a mock crash scene for its junior and senior students on the eve of prom night. The collaborative effort involved various local entities, including BST&G, Delaware County EMS, Sheriff's Office, DELCOMM, Sunbury PD, Big Walnut students, and Ohio State Highway Patrol. From the initial shock of friends arriving at the simulated crash scene to the arrival of emergency personnel and the grim pronouncements, every moment was enacted to drive home the message: distracted driving is dangerous.

Amidst the somber atmosphere, students were led into the school cafeteria after the demonstration to engage in discussions about the impact of distracted driving. The scenes depicted were not easy to witness, with some images serving as stark reminders of the real-life consequences of such actions. This demonstration served its purpose in emphasizing the importance of staying focused and making responsible choices behind the wheel, especially during events like prom night.

The event underscored the community's collaborative efforts in educating young drivers about road safety. By facing the harsh realities of distracted driving head-on, BWHS aims to empower its students to make informed decisions and prioritize safety every time they hit the road. Through initiatives like these, the hope is to cultivate a generation of conscientious drivers who understand the gravity of their actions and strive to create safer roads for all.

Big Walnut Intermediate Students Visit Their Future Home at Big Walnut Middle School

The 5th and 6th graders of Big Walnut Intermediate went on a special field trip, venturing just a few blocks away to Big Walnut Middle School. This visit marked their first glimpse into their future home for the next couple of years.

Guided by our current 7th & 8th graders, the BWI students were treated to personalized tours of their future school. From classrooms to lockers, and even a friendly warning about which principal's office to avoid (looking at you, Mr. Rucker!), they received a look at what's to come.

Our BWMS students truly shined as they shared their wisdom and enthusiasm, ensuring their younger peers felt welcomed and prepared for the transition ahead.

As we look forward to next year, remember that Big Walnut Middle School will soon house not only 7th and 8th graders but also our incoming 6th graders.

Scholastic Book Fair

Recently, the Scholastic Book Fair rolled into town, bringing with it a wave of excitement to our Big Walnut schools. Kids got to dive into a sea of books, posters, and knick-knacks, handpicking their favorites and crafting their wish lists. It was a great reminder of just how much joy and magic books still bring to our children's lives.

Watching their young eyes light up as they roamed the shelves was priceless. The Book Fair wasn't just about books; it was about fostering a love for reading and creating moments of pure delight for our students. Let's keep fueling that passion for stories and ensuring that the enchantment of books remains alive and well in our schools!

Middle School Sports

The spring sports season is quickly coming to an end, and with that, BWMS will be wrapping up athletics for the 2023-24 school year. Just like every other year, things went by in the blink of an eye, and I'm left wondering where the time went.

Joe Rucker
Big Walnut Middle School
Athletic Director

I want to shout-out each of our spring sports teams for all of the success they had. As I have mentioned many times before, BWMS competes in the best conference in the entire state and, more often than not, ends up on the good side of the win/loss column. Nearly all of our teams (Boys Tennis, Boys/Girls Lax, Baseball, Softball, Boys/Girls Track) ended up with a winning record. But more importantly, they all went out and competed with respect for their opponents and officials, worked hard and displayed sportsmanship. As the athletic director, it's the latter that I am most proud of, and appreciative to our coaches for instilling these important traits into our student-athletes.

Speaking of our coaches, I can't thank them enough for all of the time and effort they put in this year to prepare their teams for the grind of the spring season. Starting a season practicing indoors and then playing in 45-degree temps once the games/matches start can be quite the task. And then there are the inevitable conflicts when it comes to the lovely Ohio weather during March and April. No matter the hurdles put in front of them (no pun intended), our coaches stayed mentally tough and had their players prepared for anything. To coaches Baucke, Shank, Partlow, Palyas, Donohue, Jones, White, and Whiteside, I sincerely appreciate your sacrifices this season!

Finally, I want to thank the countless people who work tirelessly behind the scenes to make BWMS athletics possible. From the volunteers who work our concession stands, press boxes, stats, and track meets, the ticket takers, athletic trainers, site managers, bus drivers, etc...YOU ROCK! To Stephanie Kreager, you are the absolute best, and I couldn't imagine working with anyone else in this role. Our district administration, including Ryan McLane, Megan Forman, Brian Shelton, and Josh Frame, thank you for your leadership and dedication to Big Walnut athletics. And lastly, thank you to the parents for trusting us at BWMS with your sons and daughters. We now set our sites to 2024-25...GO EAGLES!!!

High School Sports

Big Walnut High School Spring Sports Soaring to Success!

Big Walnut High School is abuzz with excitement as our spring sports teams continue to make waves in their respective competitions. From thrilling victories to historic achievements, our athletes are showcasing their talent and dedication on the field and court. Let's take a moment to celebrate some recent triumphs:

Athletics Website

Varsity Baseball: Champions of OCC Capital Division

Congratulations to the Big Walnut HS Varsity Baseball team for their outstanding performance this season! With an impressive record of 18-3 (at the time of writing), including only suffering one loss in the OCC (13-1), our Eagles have soared to the top of the OCC Capital Division. Their recent 9-7 victory over Canal Winchester secured the OCC Championship, highlighting their resilience and teamwork on the diamond. Led by first-year Head Coach Stafford, the team has shown incredible determination, and we couldn't be prouder. As they gear up for the final stretch of the season and prepare for the OHSAA tournament, let's rally behind them and show our support. Go Eagles!

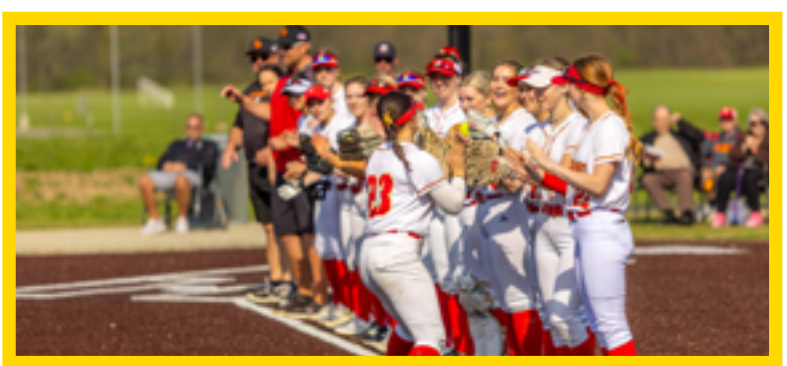
Boys Varsity Tennis: Making History with OCC Championship

Another cause for celebration is the historic achievement of the boys' varsity tennis team under the leadership of Head Coach Ryan Balaz. Finishing the season with a perfect 7-0 record in league play, the boys clinched the 2024 OCC Championship in style. The showdown against our neighbors at Delaware Hayes was nothing short of thrilling; the entire team showcased exceptional skill and determination, making this the first OCC championship in school history for the boys' tennis program. With varsity boasting a 14-4 record and JV standing strong at 13-2, it's clear that our tennis teams are forces to be reckoned with. The boys will begin postseason play on May 8.

A Historic Spring Season

As we reflect on the achievements of our varsity baseball and boys' varsity tennis teams, it's obvious that this spring season has been one for the record books at Big Walnut High School. Boys volleyball even won their first-ever OHSAA playoff match! From championship titles to groundbreaking victories, our athletes have exemplified the spirit of dedication, sportsmanship, and perseverance. As we approach the spring postseason, let's continue to rally behind our Eagles and cheer them on as they strive for further success. Whether on the field, court, or track, our athletes embody the pride and excellence of Big Walnut High School.

Let's keep the momentum going and support our teams as they write the next chapter of Big Walnut High School sports history. Go Eagles!



Big Walnut High School

Office: 740.965.3766
Fax: 740.965.1954
Guidance: 740.965.2243

713 N Miller Dr
Sunbury, OH
43074

Big Walnut Middle School

555 S Old 3C Hwy
Sunbury, OH
43074

Office: 740.965.3006
Fax: 740.965.6471

Big Walnut Intermediate School

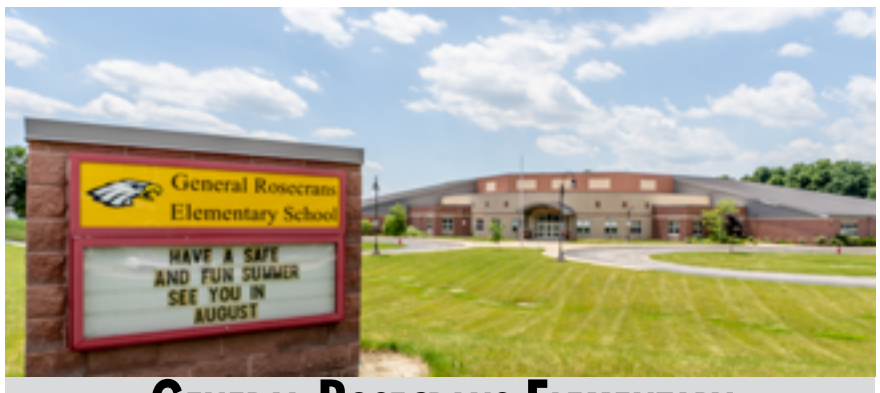
Office: 740.965.7800
Fax: 740.965.7801

777 Cheshire Rd
Sunbury, OH
43074

Big Walnut Elementary

940 S Old 3C Hwy
Sunbury, OH
43074

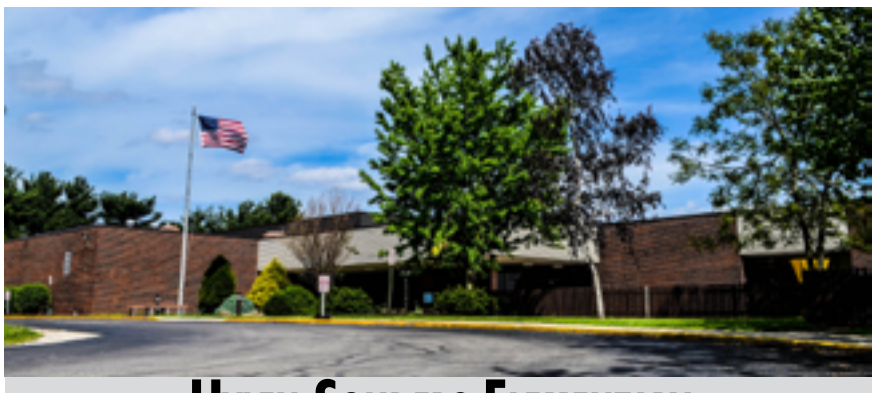
Office: 740.965.3902
Fax: 740.965.3168



General Rosecrans Elementary

Office: 740.965.8900
Fax: 740.965.8993

301 S Miller Dr
Sunbury, OH
43074



Hylen Souders Elementary

4121 Miller Paul Rd
Galena, OH
43021

Office: 740.965.3200
Fax: 740.965.3986

Prairie Run Elementary

Office: 740.965.7850
Fax: 740.965.7851

701 N Miller Dr
Sunbury, OH
43074

Early Learning Center at Harrison Street

70 Harrison St
Sunbury, OH
43074

Office: 740.965.7862